

CLAIMS

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What is claimed is:

1. A communications system comprising:

5 a user interface through which users may establish a connection with the system through use of a personal computer;

a agent interface through which agents may establish a connection with the system through a personal computer;

10 a central processor which provides for establishing a line of communication between the users and the agents based on a mode of communication selected by the user;

15 a user memory which includes personal information for the user that have established a line of communication, wherein the central processor retrieves the user information when a connection is detected, and said user information is presented to the agent with which a line of communication has been established; and

20 a queue within which connections to the user may be directed when a first predetermined condition is detected by the processor, and which may be connected with an agent when a second predetermined condition is met.

25 2. The system of claim 1 wherein the mode of communication include at least one of: audio communication, video communication, and data communication.

3. The system of claim 1 wherein the user interface provides a connection to a data network and the

users establish a connection through the interface using a web browser.

4. The system of claim 3 wherein the data network is the Internet.

5 5. The system of claim 1 wherein the user interface provides for connections established over a Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN).

6. The system of claim 1 wherein the system is incorporated in a network server.

10 7. The system of claim 1 wherein agent interface provides for connections established over a Local Area Network (LAN).

8. The system of claim 1 wherein the first predetermined condition is unavailability of an agent, and the second predetermined condition is the agent becoming available to receive the connection stored in the queue.

9. The system of claim 1 wherein the system further includes and agent monitoring module through which the agents may log into the system and amend status information.

10. The system of claim 9 wherein performance information may be accessed and viewed through use of the agent monitoring module.

11. The system of claim 3 further including a first memory which includes user interactive screen displays

which are presented to the users that have established a connection through the user interface.

12. The system of claim further including a second memory which includes agent interactive screen displays which are presented to the agents that have established a connection through the agent interface.

13. The system of claim 12 wherein the status includes at least one of: agents currently active, identification information for connections in the queue, change of agent status.

14. The system of claim 1 wherein the system further includes a call back processing module which provides for the entry of call back information by the system user, and which periodically performs a search to locate relevant entries for which call back procedures are initiated.

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15. A method of providing communications computer users comprising the steps of:

detecting a connection established by at least one user through a user interface;

5 displaying a first interactive screen graphic to the at least one user, wherein the interactive display graphic includes selections as to a desired mode of communication and provides for entry of selected information;

10 based on the selected information entered, retrieving from a memory personal information relating to the at least one user;

performing a search to determine if an agent is available to establish a connection with the at least one user;

15 if an agent is available, providing the personal information to the agent through a second screen display and establishing the connection between the user and the agent according to the mode of communication chosen by the at least one user; and

20 if an agent is unavailable, placing the at least one user's connection in a queue until one of the agents becomes available, wherein a connection is established between the user and the agent according to the mode of communication chosen by the at least one user

16. The method of claim 15 wherein, when a connection is placed in the queue, presenting a third interactive screen display which includes least one hypertext link to the at least one user, wherein a connection is established to a designated website when one of the hypertext links is chosen.

17. The method of claim 15 wherein the at least one user establishes a connection over a data network.

18. The method of claim 17 wherein the data network is the Internet.

19. The method of claim 15 wherein the at least one user establishes a connection over the PSTN.

20. The method of claim 15 wherein the connection to the agent are established over a Local Area Network (LAN).

21. The method of claim 15 wherein the modes of communication include at least one of: video, audio, and data.

22. The method of claim 15 further comprising the step of receiving change in status information from one of the agents, and changing the status of the agent accordingly.

23. The method of claim 15 further including the step of storing performance information for selected numbers of the agents and displaying the performance information upon receipt of a valid request.

24. The method of claim 16 further comprising the
step of generating selected information with regards to
the at least one user in the queue and presenting the
selected information to the at least one user through the
5 second interactive screen display.

25. The method of claim 15 further including the
step of if an agent is unavailable presenting a call back
screen display through which the system user may select a
call back option and enter information to facilitate a
10 call back.

26. The method of claim 25 further comprising the
step of periodically searching information entered
through the call back screen and based on the information
stored therein, initiating automated call back functions.

27. The method of claim 15 further comprising the
step of presenting to the user an informational screen
display containing personal data with regards to agent
15 when the connection is established.